

BACKSTAGE



Published by the Park's Marketing Division, BACKSTAGE DISNEYLAND is an employee relations publication written, designed, and edited by Disneyland employees. BACKSTAGE is printed by the Studio's Print Shop in Burbank, CA. Address all correspondence to: BACKSTAGE DISNEYLAND, 1313 Harbor Blvd., Anaheim, CA 92803.

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ABOUT THE COVER

One of the most popular Disneyland characters is Brer Bear. Park guests enjoy his playful antics and Disneyland employees love him because he is so personable. He's also very big (almost eight feet tall), and has the "think big" slogan painted on his favorite drinking mug at home. But, like many of us, it's the little things that sometimes bother Brer Bear. BACKSTAGE recently spent a day with the bear and came up with a character study about him that begins on page 11.

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THE BUILDING OF A SHOW

An Interview with Van France about "Welcome to the Show" — A Preview of Disneyland's Orientation Program.

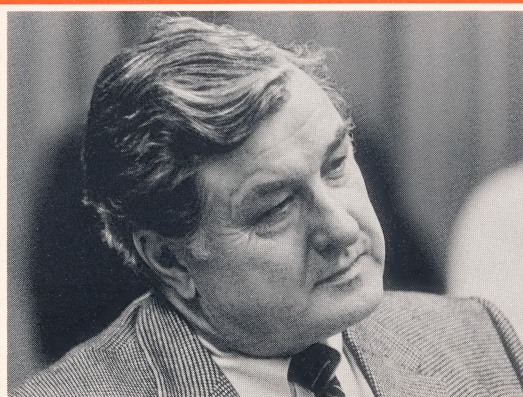


Dick Nunis, V.P. Disneyland Operations

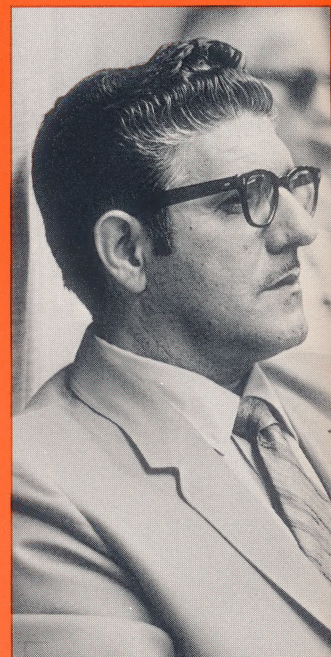
Card Walker, Executive V.P. Walt Disney Productions



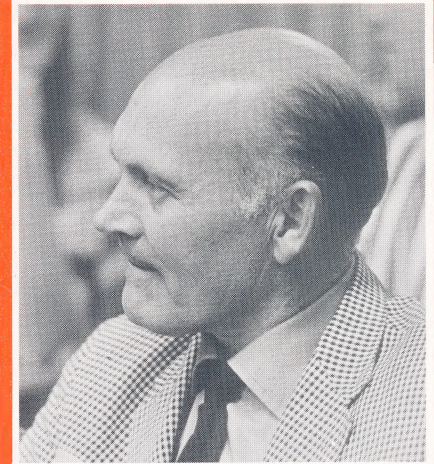
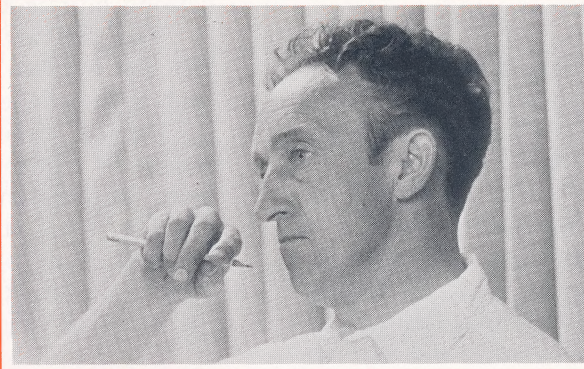
DRC's Ron Doyle



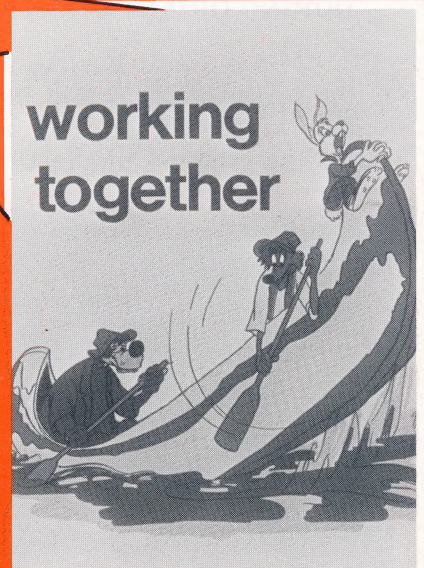
Donn Tatum, President, Walt Disney Productions



John Catone, Main Files



Park employees listen to an orientation discussion about working together to maintain the Disneyland image.



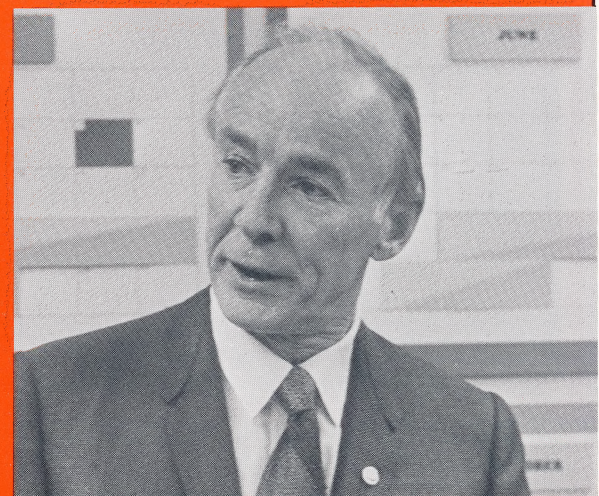
"All of us didn't come over on the 'Mayflower,' but since we're all in the same boat now we might as well paddle together."

The main point of this quote was the basic premise the University of Disneyland used to create its new "Welcome to the Show" program — a 2½-hour film and conversation session about Disneyland and Walt Disney Productions that was presented to more than 3,152 Disney employees this summer.

"Welcome to the Show" was another annual orientation program (changed in design, presentation, and appearance), reminding Park employees that we are in the same boat (because we do work at Disneyland), and that we must work together to successfully maintain the Disneyland Show.

Van France, Manager-University of Disneyland, was the man who coordinated the production of "Welcome to the Show," and along with his staff, presented this orientation program to groups of 5 to 30 employees at all hours of the working day, including 7 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. sessions.

What follows is a question and answer session held at the University about "Welcome to the Show." The interview, conducted by BACK-STAGE, is supplemented with photographs taken during various orientation sessions.



Van France - "When I'm unhappy with a job, I quit."

"VAN, WHAT WAS THE BASIC OBJECTIVE OF 'WELCOME TO THE SHOW'?"

"The basic objective was to make sure we keep the 'show' in Disneyland show business. We have grown so rapidly, that it sometimes seems we have a tendency to think more in terms of 'business' than show.

"We have to constantly remind ourselves that Disneyland is the world's most spectacular show, and that we're all showmen in it. Business is important, but our product is the show. Also, we can't remind ourselves too often and too regularly that Disneyland is . . . the one and only Disneyland, and not an amusement park."

"SHOULD THE UNIVERSITY OF DISNEYLAND DISCUSS, IN DEPTH, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE DISNEY IMAGE AND THE DISNEY REALITY DURING ORIENTATION PROGRAMS? WHY?"

"This is a loaded question. The difference between the so called image and the so called reality lies, as they say, in the attitude of the interpreter. I think it's the function of the University of Disneyland to

discuss anything, at any time, if it affects communications, morale, or the attitudes of our people.

"This problem of the 'image' and 'reality' sounds like the modern trend to label all problems as 'gaps' such as the cliché thing of the 'generation gap.'

"I think some people are talking about the work reality of corporate life, and this is going to vary from department to department, and division to division. When it comes to reality, we have to remember that many of our Disney people like their work, their work situations, and enjoy the benefits of working in a large corporation.

"On the other hand, you and I both know that we have some people who don't like their work, their supervision, their shifts, or hardly anything, including their paychecks.

"In our basic orientation program, we find that for 85% of the people, this is their first job in a large corporation. Obviously, there are, for them, many realities of corporate life which may be totally different than the image they had when they were previously here as guests.

"I talked to a young woman who went to work for another outdoor entertainment venture. The feedback that I get is that the Disney work reality is a better work reality than the ones found in other places."

"WHAT WAS THE BASIC POINT OF TRYING TO PUT EVERYONE WHO WORKS HERE THROUGH THE PROGRAM?"

"This was labeled as a preview presentation, and that's exactly what it was. We are attempting to tell our present personnel what it is that we show and tell new people. We don't want to give one presentation to new people when they find out that what permanent people are doing is something different."

"SINCE EMPLOYEE COMMENT SHEETS WERE AVAILABLE TO BE FILLED OUT AFTER EACH ORIENTATION SESSION, WHAT WAS THE GENERAL EMPLOYEE OPINION OF 'WELCOME TO THE SHOW'?"



Harvy Siverson, Paint Shop, and Rima Bruce, Merchandising (standing), capture their audience's attention as they introduce each other during a "Welcome to the Show" session. Interested in what Harvy and Rima have to say are (from left to right, sitting): Linda Alles, G.E.'s Carousel of Progress; Lulu Miller, Wardrobe; Disneyland's Grooming Coordinator, Cathy Birk (back to camera); and Carol Hodges, Merchandising. Cathy Birk also helped the University give many orientation presentations.



Mable McKibbin, a Disneyland employee since 1969, set up many orientation programs.

"We passed out 'critic sheets' because we wanted to get ideas for improving the program. These were not intended to be an objective opinion poll such as we frequently conduct through Cal Tech or through Exit Questionnaires.

"Generally, the reaction was enthusiastic and appreciative. Some people asked, 'Are supervisors going through the program'? The answer is 'yes.'

"Among the critical comments, we did get the idea that some people would like any program to have less 'pixie dust' and more practicality. The problem is that our entertainment product is pixie dust'.

"On a hot, crowded, smoggy day, it can be tough to remember that our business is to 'create happiness', but that's show business! That's one of the basic disciplines of being in this kind of business."

"HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE NEGATIVE CRITICISMS, AND WHAT WOULD IT TAKE . . . IN YOUR OPINION . . . TO GET A FAVORABLE RESPONSE FROM THE NEGATIVE CRITICS IN FUTURE ORIENTATION SESSIONS?"

"If I spent too much time thinking about negative

criticisms, I would be a nervous wreck. We take the negatives into consideration, but we are going to build on the positives.

"It's damned easy to be negative, and I personally have a hard time understanding why some of the criticisms we received aren't processed through the channels of union grievance procedures, or supervisor communications. Personally, when I am too unhappy with a job, I quit . . . and I have the record to prove it."

"HOW DID YOU COME ACROSS THE IDEA TO PRESENT 'WELCOME TO THE SHOW' IN THE MANNER YOU DID?"

"Fundamentally, we wanted to get away from anything with a classroom atmosphere. By setting the thing up, in a simulated studio atmosphere, we hoped that people would get the idea that they were in show business rather than some class of a local junior college."

"DO YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE TO 'TELL IT LIKE IT IS' IN AN ORGANIZATION AS BIG AS DISNEYLAND?"



Card Walker addresses Disney employees during an orientation session conducted by Van France.



Carol Hodges, Joe Pasquesi, and Sandi Reis become better acquainted during "Welcome to the Show."



Bob Davis, Frank Martinez, and Howard Peterson are pictured left to right attending one of the early presentations of "Welcome to the Show."

"Personally, I think 'telling it like it is' falls into the category of modern cliches, such as 'meaningful goals', 'relevant roles', or 'being up tight'.

"Neither I, nor any members of our staff, can in my opinion, 'tell it like it is'. All we can do is 'tell it like we see it' or even feel it.

"We do tell people that this is a corporation, a large organization, and it is a place where people have to work under a variety of disciplines. We say that it should be fun to work here. If a person can't find any fun in his job, his marriage, or his school, part of the problem is his own. Our function is not one of providing psychiatric help for people."

"IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE BASIC FUNCTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DISNEYLAND?"

"I don't think of the University of Disneyland as a common variety of training program. I see it as a most important function in making certain that the Disney standards and Disney ways of working together are preserved as we grow.

"Anybody knows that we are no longer a happy group of artists working in the Studio under the

personal direction of Walt and Roy Disney.

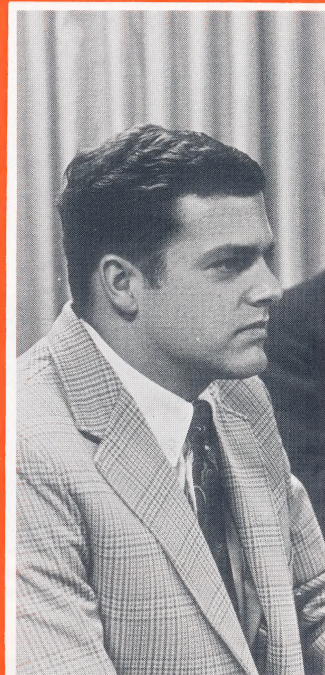
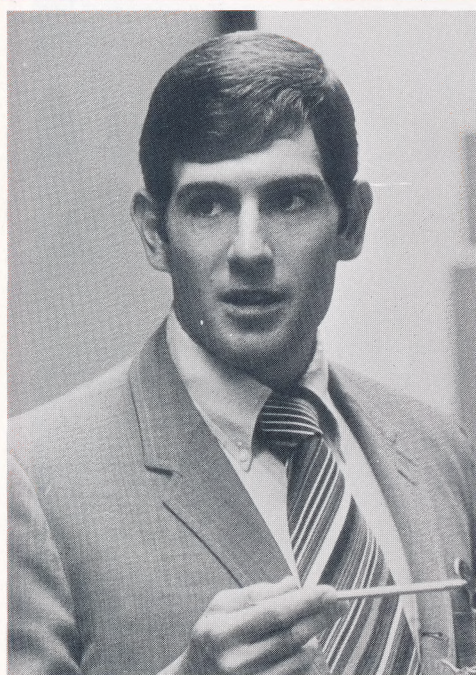
"Merely in our outdoor entertainment shows, we have 6,000 people here in California, and we will have 7,000 in Florida. Making sure that everybody sticks with our standards of quality, friendship, and informality is a big job."

"YOU HAVE WORKED (OFF AND ON) FOR DISNEYLAND SINCE 1955. WHAT DO YOU THINK HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE IN THE PARK DURING THE PAST 16 YEARS?"

"I'm sorry, but I don't believe in the 'good old days.' Everybody has a tendency to talk about the 'good' in the old days rather than the bad.

"In many ways we are more efficient than we were 16 years ago when we didn't know what we were doing. On the other hand, I am sure that we are not so damned smart today as we think we are. We have a whole new set of problems and situations, and I'd rather look ahead than look back.

"When I hear people say 'I wish I were young again,' I have the feeling that they really haven't matured and have forgotten some of the problems of growing up, which can be very difficult, at best."



Marc Lance, Gary Fravel, and Chris Ridgway (L-R), have 20 years of Disneyland experience among them. They presented "Welcome To The Show" to Disney employees.



Al Mutke, Line and Backstage Editor introduces Dick Nunis, and the two create a lighter moment during an orientation presentation.



Lee David, Gary Fravel, and Jim Unstead (L-R), compare orientation notes together.

CANOE RACES

INSIDE DISNEYLAND:

2,000 EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATE IN ANNUAL SUMMERTIME RACE

The setting is Disneyland's "Rivers of America." The event is the canoe races, and the participants are Disneyland employees. Their objective - having a good time, and having a good time at the canoe races begins at 5:30 a.m. when the first canoes hit the water and teams begin their practice and qualifying runs.

Racing against time; men's, women's, and mixed teams paddle furiously around the 5/8-mile river to record the fastest time in their respective divisions.

After a month of paddling, practicing, and battling the clock and other competitors, the fastest teams in each of the three divisions race again for the title.

The already tired and sore muscles of the finalists generate the power that paddle their canoes just one more time around "Rivers of America." From the river's bank, scores of employees cheer their favorite crew on to victory.

And finally, it's all over. The Hotel's Life Guards, the Mississippi Queens, and the Superstokers are the winners. They leap for joy, are treated to a victory dunk in the river they have challenged for the past month, and pose for pictures. They are the champs!

A half hour later the victors, losers, and the employee crowds begin another workday hosting Disneyland's guests.

However, the only real losers at the canoe races were those employees who found it hard to catch up on their sleep.



Having a good time at 5:30 a.m. for some employees meant catching up on some needed sleep.



During practice sessions, canoe teams worked hard and fast in hopes of establishing a good qualifying time that would put them into the semi-final races.



The "Superstokers," a team of ride operators and supervisors.



Wet, tired, and happy the "Mississippi Queens" and the Hotel team position their canoes for publicity photographs.



The women's division winner, the "Mississippi Queens" receive a rather forceful victory dunk in "Rivers of America."

SCENES FROM THE PAST



Hanging high above Disneyland, this daring escape artist captured the attention of Park guests during early days of Park operation.



Early construction photos show the castle and Frontierland taking shape.



Disneyland taking shape in 1954. The only thing around at that time was orange groves.



As Disneyland changed, so did Mickey and other characters.

Remember the escape artist hanging upside down over Fantasyland, Professor Keller's Wild Animal Act, or Puffin's Bake Shop? If so, you really are a Disneyland "old-timer." These particular attractions and exhibits were a part of the original Disneyland show in 1955.

Since Opening Day, many attractions, exhibits, and food facilities have been removed from the Disneyland stage. On Main Street: Professor Keller's Animal Show, Shooting Gallery, the Red Wagon Inn, and Puffin's Bakery are nothing more than nostalgic memories now. So are the Midget and Junior Autopias and the Viewliner of Fantasyland.

Scenes of the past many "old-timers" will remember in Frontierland include: the Stagecoach, the Conestoga Wagon, the Corral - with the smallest horses in the world, Magnolia Park Bandstand, the Gazebo, Chicken Plantation Restaurant, Don Defore's Silver Banjo eating place, and the fishing dock on Tom Sawyer's Island.

Gone from Tomorrowland are: Space Station X-1, Satellite View



Professor Keller and his wild animals gave their performances in the late 50's at the end of Main Street, near INA'S Carefree Corner.

The first Rocket To The Moon attraction towers above the Flight Circle (foreground). In the Flight Circle guests could fly model airplanes and operate model power boats as spectators watched.

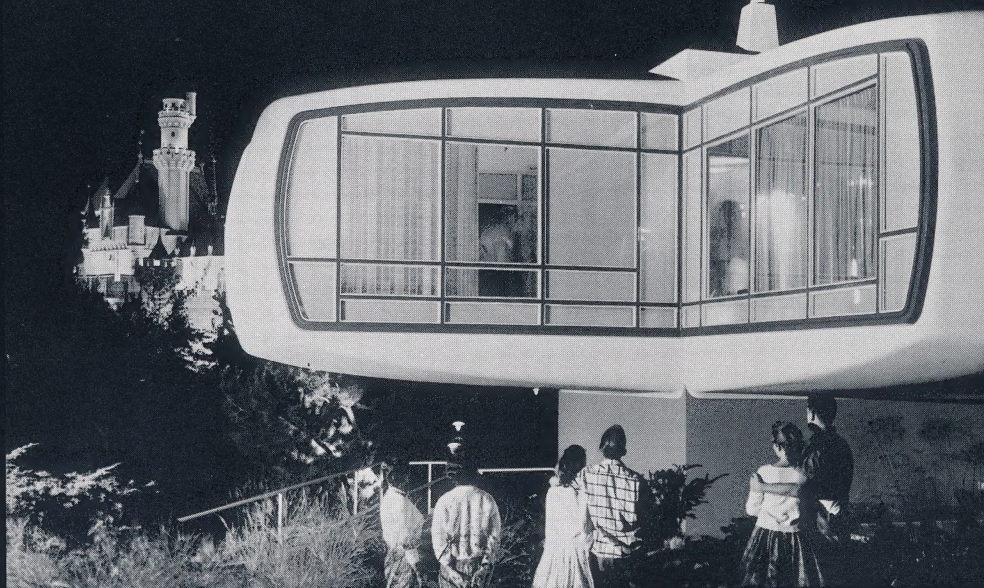


of America, the original Flight to the Moon, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, Art of Animation, Flying Saucers, Phantom Boats, Monsanto's House of the Future, the World's Clock, Model Aircraft Flight Circle, Avenue of State Flags, and Holidayland. They were all the yesterday of Disneyland.

The "oldies but goodies" of the Park (20 of the original attractions that were a part of the show when Disneyland opened in July, 1955) are still in operation today. They are: on Main Street - the fire engines, horseless carriages, street cars, surreys, Penny Arcade, and the Cinema. In Adventureland: the Jungle Cruise; and in Frontierland: the Mark Twain, pack mules, and the canoes. The Santa Fe-Disneyland RR was also operating on Opening Day, as was the Autopia in Tomorrowland.

In Fantasyland, Casey Jr., Dumbo, the Carrousel, Mad Hatter Tea Party, Mr. Toad, the Motor Boats, Peter Pan, and Snow White have also entertained our guests since Day One and are scenes of the Park's present as well as the past.

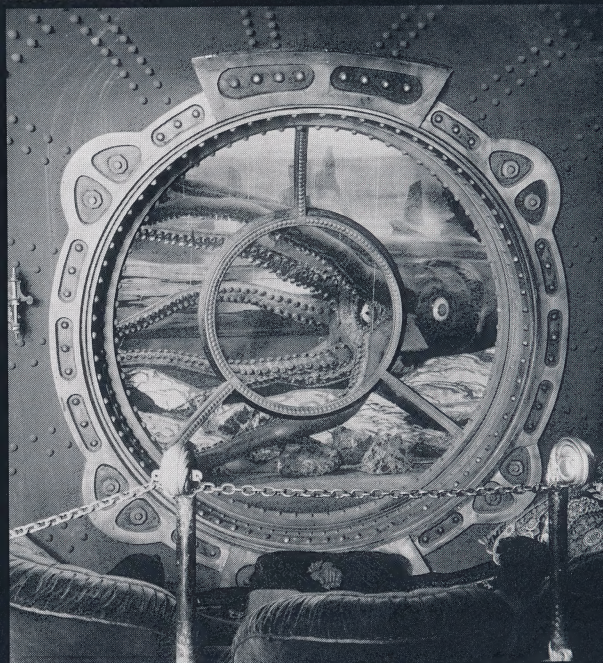
At Disneyland, it has been the successful past that has built the present which in turn will build the promising future.



Monsanto's "House of the Future", located at the entrance of Tomorrowland, gave way to new construction when Tomorrowland was completely remodeled in 1967.



Puffin's Bake Shop on Main Street was one of the finest bakeries in Southern California, according to many 16-year Disneyland employees.



A scene from the old 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea Exhibit.



Walt Disney and the Richard Nixons dedicate the monorail in 1959.



On his way to the Park, the bear always waves good-bye to his neighbors (who always watch him leave).

"Sometimes it's really tough being a bear," comments Brer Bear, one of the happiest, kindest, and most popular of the Disneyland characters.

The incident that prompted that comment was another in a long line of confrontations that Brer has been involved in trying to convince people that he really is a bear.

Since he's been a part of the Disneyland Show, many of our guests have referred to him as "a dog, a big animal, a gorilla, and have even called him 'Goofy'."

"Being called all these different names really got to me when I first started working here," says Brer. "But, after a while I got used to it. I found that many other character friends of mine working in the Park also had the same problem of mistaken identity. So, not being recognized all the time was something that all of us characters learned to live with. However, the other day, something happened that really got me down on all fours.



After a good night's sleep, the bear jumps in the shower and gets cleaned up for a day's work at the Park.

BRER BEAR

BRER BEAR AT
HOME, AT WORK,
AND AT PLAY



Like a good bear, Brer shaves and brushes his teeth every morning.



Once at the Park, Brer entertains guests with a dance, makes them laugh, or just stands around and lets the guests watch him.



For breakfast, Brer always has one egg and a Coke. (Bear breakfasts are just a little different than the kind humans eat).

"I was on my way backstage, after having a bear of a day, when a little girl came up to me, tugged on my leg, and shouted, 'How ya doing Brer Duck'?"

"Now, that really got to me - it really hurt. You know, there's no such animal as Brer Duck. That's what really hurt - I felt like a nobody."

"He really is a bear," says Brer's close friends. "He leads a normal life, just like any other bear in his position. It's true that he has a lot of human qualities and actions, but that's because he deals with humans on a constant basis."

"However, once you get to know him you can't mistake that big lug for anything else but a bear," comments his close companion, Brer

Fox. "Nothing else grows that big" says the fox. "He's as big as a day."

A day in the life of Brer Bear is recorded in the photographs of this article. The bear was kind enough to let BACKSTAGE accompany him for a day to find out what kind of life he really lives. He may be a bear, but he's an awfully human bear. One thing we're really sure of is, he isn't Brer Duck.

MORE PHOTOS ON NEXT PAGE



After his workday is over, Brer jumps back into his VW and heads for home.



Once home, the bear tests the pool water. (Who says he's not Brer Duck?!)



After a big dinner, Brer catches up on his reading. Here he reads about his brother in Florida who is currently working for Walt Disney World.



Brer soaks up some late afternoon sun and gets in a quick game of Volleyball.



Before hitting the sack, Brer enjoys a good fire and thinks about what tomorrow will bring.



Once in the sack (yes, he does sleep in a bed — a big one), Brer goes over his agenda for the next day before falling asleep.



Hank Block has been a Disneyland employee since March, 1956, and was a natural choice to author this issue's article of "Scenes of the Past." Hank joined the Park after serving 27 years in the Marine Corps. He retired as a Captain. He's been associated with BACKSTAGE since it began, has worked on the Mark Twain longer than any Disneyland employee, and is currently working the Tiki Room - his favorite attraction.



Senior Photographer Renie Bardeau joined Disneyland in June, 1959. A marketing major, Renie formerly served on the University of Arizona Press Bureau and as a free-lance photographer for the major newspapers in Tucson, Arizona. Renie did the photography for BACKSTAGE'S orientation and canoe racing articles.



Gary Moore joined Disneyland in May, 1970 as a photographer. Gary's contributions for this issue are the photographs on these two pages. He also takes some of the photos that appear in the LINE. Prior to working for Disneyland, Gary spent two years with the Hughes Tool Company as an aerial and armament photographer.



Jim Bauman is responsible for the Brer Bear photographs, including the cover shot. He's been with Disneyland since February and currently works in the New Orleans Main Kitchen. Jim, a native of Canada, hopes to be a photographer for National Geographic and spends much of his time freelancing for Orange County newspapers.



Marc Lance has been with Disneyland since 1964. He began as an ice cream fountain man at Carnation. Marc's contribution to this issue of BACKSTAGE was helping to put together the article on "Welcome to the Show." He's a microbiology major at Cal State Long Beach and is currently working on his masters. Marc spent this summer as a crew-member on the COLUMBIA sailing ship.



Ron Doyle, DRC Coordinator, has been with Disneyland since 1959. His contributions for this issue included work on the canoe races and encouragement with the orientation article.

PEOPLE WHO MAKE BACKSTAGE GO...



Al Mutke joined Disneyland in August 1970 as employee publications editor. Al writes the LINE and coordinates the efforts involved in putting out BACKSTAGE. Before joining Disneyland, he spent five years with Blue Chip Stamps as an industrial editor.



Dawn Esposito is the artist on Backstage from the Marketing Art Dept. She has been with Disneyland since 1969.

PEOPLE MAKE IT GO...

A black and white collage of various people in different settings. The collage includes a man in a suit and glasses, a woman in a hat, a man in a uniform, a woman in a striped shirt, and a man in a suit. The text "PEOPLE MAKE IT GO..." is written in a bold, sans-serif font at the top left of the collage.

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